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**PEMBROKE MAN INDICTED ON CHARGES HE ALLEGEDLY SCHEMED TO
STEAL \$6,000 IN EBT BENEFITS**

BROCKTON – A Pembroke man has been indicted on charges that he allegedly stole approximately \$6,000 in EBT benefits that were intended for a disabled individual, Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz announced today.

A Plymouth County Grand Jury today indicted Christopher Gardner (DOB: 09/24/82) of Pembroke, on one count each of Larceny by Single Scheme and Larceny from a Disabled Person.

Gardner, who was working as an assistant manager at a Massachusetts Department of Mental Health run residential group home in Whitman at the time of the alleged theft, was discovered to have been using a group home client's EBT card and benefits to make purchases without that client's permission.

An investigation by the Office of the State Auditor found that from January, 2015 through October, 2017, Gardner allegedly made purchases at various grocery stores totaling over \$6,382. The investigation found that Gardner had possession of the disabled victim's EBT card without the victim's knowledge or permission and none of the purchases made were for the client. Gardner also allegedly used his own grocery rewards card in conjunction with the client's EBT card.

Gardner will be summonsed for arraignment in Brockton Superior Court at a later date.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Shanan Buckingham and was investigated by the Office of the State Auditor.

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